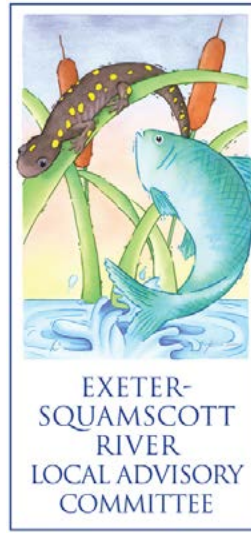


Exeter-Squamscott River Watershed Management Plan 2022 - 2032 | Executive Summary

The **Exeter-Squamscott River Watershed Management Plan Update 2022** (Plan) was developed by the Exeter-Squamscott River Local Advisory Committee (ESRLAC) with assistance from the Rockingham Planning Commission with funds provided by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. The Plan describes the priorities for ESRLAC in the coming decade and provides an overview

of land use and natural resources in twelve watershed communities - Chester, Sandown, Danville, Raymond, Fremont, Kingston, Brentwood, East Kingston, Kensington, Exeter, Newfields, and Stratham. Since the river's enrollment in the NH Rivers Management and Protection Program in 1996, ESRLAC has acted as a volunteer steward of the river, working with landowners, developers, and regulatory agencies to protect the river from the impacts of development and a changing climate. ESRLAC is committed to partnering with landowners, Select Boards, Planning Boards, Conservation Commissions, and with the many organizations and agencies vested in protecting water quality, wildlife habitat, and cultural resources in the Exeter-Squamscott River watershed. Productive partnerships are the foundation for successful implementation of the priorities stated in this Plan.



Mission of the Exeter-Squamscott River Local Advisory Committee

- Improve water quality to meet federal and state standards.
- Advocate for preservation and enhancement of aquatic, riparian, and upland habitats.
- Promote responsible recreational use of the river and disseminate information about historical, cultural, and environmental resources in the watershed.
- Incorporate climate change science into ESRLAC's work.
- Highlight the priorities of ESRLAC and promote best management practices within the watershed.
- Encourage the adoption and enforcement of model land use regulations to protect water quality.

Issues of Concern for the Exeter-Squamscott River

- Manage stormwater and minimize impervious surfaces to protect water quality.
- Reduce nutrient pollution from lawn fertilizer, septic systems, and wastewater treatment plants.
- Incorporate the projected impacts of climate change into the design of land development proposals.

Priorities of the Exeter-Squamscott River Local Advisory Committee

ESRLAC supports the sustainable management of the Exeter-Squamscott River watershed. ESRLAC defines sustainable watershed management as actions that restore natural hydrologic variability and riverine and riparian habitats, maintain acceptable water quality and quantity, and advance land stewardship and low impact development practices. ESRLAC will work with landowners, towns, public agencies, organizations, and businesses that advance the following priorities and activities:

Priority: Improve water quality and water quantity to meet federal and state standards. Activities that advance this priority include:

- Support traditional land uses and stewardship such as farming and forestry following Best Management Practices.

- Promote participation in the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Volunteer River Assessment Program (VRAP).
- Promote and support permanent conservation of land in the watershed, with priority on shoreline properties, and strong adherence to easement restrictions and purposes.
- Work with watershed communities to minimize impacts of nonpoint source pollution, especially stormwater.
- Promote the responsible use of residential fertilizer.
- Work with watershed communities to promote proper wastewater disposal and septic system inspection and maintenance.
- Advocate for the identification and protection of prime wetlands in the watershed.
- Support identification of culvert locations and culvert repair, replacement, and maintenance.
- Encourage watershed communities to practice DES best management practices to reduce road salt application and participate in training programs for chloride application and other road treatment alternatives.
- Promote innovative septic system design that improves wastewater treatment.
- Advocate for local land use regulations that reduce creation of impervious surface.
- Participate in the pending instream flow study proposed by NHDES.
- Support sustainable practices throughout the watershed.

Priority: Preserve and enhance aquatic, riparian, and upland habitats. Activities that advance this priority include:

- Advocate for proper stream channel integrity to minimize flooding and erosion.
- Support remediation of eroded shoreland and washouts.
- Support replacements of culverts and other impediments that restrict aquatic connectivity.
- Advocate for land conservation projects and the protection of wildlife corridors.
- Support public information programs about wildlife habitat.
- Promote education, identification, and removal of invasive species along the river corridor.
- Collaborate with NH Fish and Game when appropriate.

Priority: Promote responsible recreational use of the river and support protection of historical, cultural, and environmental resources in the watershed. Actions that support this priority include:

- Work with communities to increase public access points to the river.
- Develop a map of public access points and public spaces.
- Engage youth in educational and recreational activities.
- Advocate for responsible boating speed on the river.

Priority: Incorporate climate change science into watershed management. Activities that support this priority include:

- Consult climate change data and reports when reviewing and commenting on NHDES permit applications.
- Advocate for land use regulations that incorporate climate adaptation planning.

Information on ESRLAC is available at www.exeteriver.org or by contacting ESRLAC via the Rockingham Planning Commission at 603-778-0885, email@rpc-nh.org.

